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Letter dated 14 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine regarding the ongoing actions of the Russian Federation towards the citizens of Ukraine (see annex).

I would appreciate your having the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 69 (c) of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/71/150.

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Annex to the letter dated 14 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine regarding the ongoing actions of the Russian Federation towards the citizens of Ukraine

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine expresses its firm protest against the actions, illegal and humiliating to people's dignity, by the Russian Federation towards the citizens of Ukraine who are being unlawfully kept by that State on its territory as well as in the occupied parts of Ukraine.

Despite repeated strong calls from the Ukrainian side and the international community and international obligations assumed by the Russian side, the Russian Federation continues to keep at least 29 citizens of Ukraine unlawfully in custody; dozens of citizens are being persecuted in the occupied Crimea; 16 citizens of Ukraine are considered missing; and 115 Ukrainians are being kept as hostages in the Donbas.

We have to admit that the capture, torture and persecution of Ukrainian citizens have become common practice for Moscow.

The cases of Oleg Sentsov, Oleksandr Kolchenko, Ilmi Umerov, Ahtem Ciygoz and of many others are telling examples of the return of the Russian Federation to the political repressions and trials known from the era of Stalinism. It flagrantly violates all possible international legal standards in the protection of human rights, in particular, the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The latest decision by the occupying Russian authorities to reject claims by the side of the defence in the case of the Deputy Chairman of the Mejlis, Ilmi Umerov, as well as his previous placement in a psychiatric hospital, are vivid illustrations of such inhuman policies.

There is an understanding in Ukraine that only the united and persistent efforts of the world leaders and the democratic community, to which human rights and human dignity constitute the highest priority, can overcome the present tyranny of the Russian authorities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine reiterates its appeal to the international community to exert all the legal and political measures possible towards Russia for it to cease its totalitarian practice of suppressing human rights and freedom of speech and to immediately release all Ukrainian political prisoners and hostages.